GIVE $2,000,000 TO SEE MOVIES

This Amount Spent Yearly by the People of the City of Washington.

GROWTH IS MARVELOUS

First Motion Picture Theater in City Received License to Do Business October 29, 1907.

The people of Washington spend more than $2,000,000 a year to see the movies.

This fact is almost inconceivable to residents who remember that eight years ago not a cent was being spent in this city for the picture play.

The first motion picture theater in this city did not receive a license to open its doors to the public until October 29, 1907. From that day until present the motion picture business here has had a mushroom growth that has exceeded even the wildest dreams of the men who first "took a chance" by investing money.

It is estimated that there are about 70,000 paid admissions to motion picture houses each day now and the leading motion picture promoters of the city calmly aver that "the business has just begun its real, normal and substantial growth." These men predict that the motion picture will make just as much progress in the next eight years as in the last eight.

The promoters point out that while there is a daily average of about 70,000 paid admissions these admissions average only about 7½ cents each. Some houses charge 10 cents admission. The majority charge 5 cents. There is one house, the Columbia Theater, charging 10 and 20-cent admissions. The promoters look to the day when the average admission charge will be 25 cents. "Then the business will begin its real growth," they say.

In the latter part of October, 1907, Thomas Armat opened the National Capital's first motion picture playhouse. It was not much of a theater. In reality it was not a theater but an ordinary storeroom, crudely remodeled to meet the actual needs of picture projection. Armat rented the ground floor space of the building at Tenth and D streets northwest that had been occupied as a newspaper office. He plastered the exterior with signs, had a "barker" at the door and charged 5 cents admission.

The pictures were of the "funny" variety, without plot or seriousness, and designed chiefly to show the tricks that could be done with the new motion picture invention. The reels of film were 500 feet in length and for a time Armat showed only one reel for 5 cents. When this reel was shown the audience was expected to vacate so that the show room could be filled again.

Such was Washington's first picture play "palace." Then Lew Simons stepped into history as the proprietor of the city's second motion picture house by opening a small theater in D between Ninth and Tenth streets northwest. He called the theater the Unique. He conducted the Unique for nearly a year before opening the Palace Theater.

From 1907 when the city boasted two cinematograph theaters until the present growth of the business may be traced through the records of W. H. Coombs, license clerk at the Municipal Building. It was Coombs who issued the first license to Armat.

In 1908 Coombs licensed eight picture houses. Ten were added in 1909. In 1910 the motion picture theater fever was at its height and scores of companies and individuals were seeking to finance new "get-rich-quick" schemes. In that year seventy-four new theaters were licensed. But failure greeted the majority of the ventures because fools rushed in where angels feared to tread and the man with money found himself losing while the man with experience was reaping large profits.

The municipal records show that in the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1911, seventy-four public halls and twenty public parks were licensed. The public parks were the first motion picture parks, commonly known as airdomes. The seventy-four public halls licensed were not all motion picture houses because dance halls are included in the category of public halls.

In the fiscal year ended June 30, 1912 there were seventy-one public halls and twenty-seven public parks. In the next fiscal year there were seventy-three public halls and nineteen public parks.

In the fiscal year which ended June 30, 1915, there were ninety-four public halls and twenty-three public parks. Of the former, about ten were dance halls and of the latter about eight were dance parks. The foregoing license figures are the best records obtainable of the growth of the motion picture business in the National Capital.

The transition in the business between 1907 and today has been nothing short of marvelous. There is hardly any comparison between Armat's first motion picture room and the big, film play theaters throughout the city, today. Even the Columbia Theater, one of the biggest in the city, is being used during the summer for the exhibition of high-class picture plays.

Fortunes have been made in the business here as in all other large cities and the big picture playhouses like the Strand, Garden, Crandall's and others in Ninth street northwest, the Savoy in Fourteenth street northwest, and the Apollo in the northeast stand as monuments to the success of the business.

In Mount Pleasant and Columbia Heights the movie "fans" have come to regard the Savoy Theater as a "gold mine" for its owners. Here is how the "fans" estimates the wealth that pours in at the ticket office:

"The Savoy seats about 1,000 persons in the open air park which adjoins its winter playhouse. This park is filled up about three times each fair summer night. That means about 3,000 admissions at 10 cents each, or total receipts of $300 a night. Expenses surely won't go much above $50 a night, leaving a net margin of profit of $250 a night. There is a net profit of about $37,500 for the 150 warm nights that the park is open."

Whether the figures approach the exact statistics is a question which could be answered only by the management of the park, but the figures represent the golden stream that the movie "fan" pictures to himself when he pays his own dime and wonders how many others are giving up a dime to see the show.

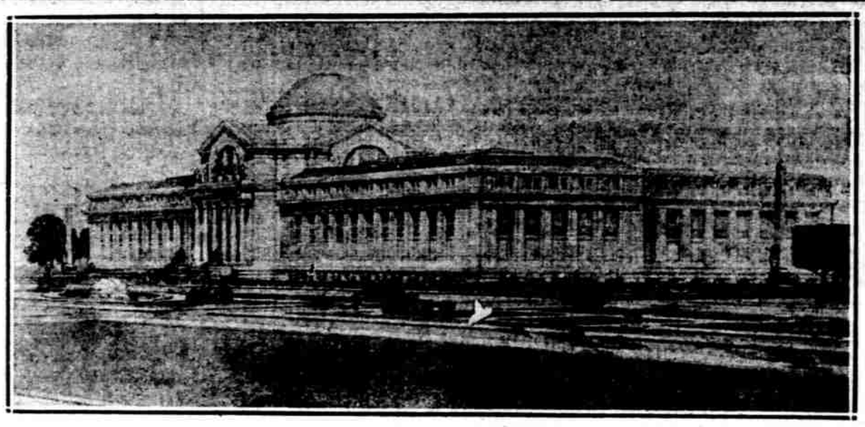
Tom Moore is credited with having made more money in motion pictures than any other man in Washington. Whether that is true can be surmised only. It is said by some that Moore has made a million. Others say his fortune will be less than half that amount. At any rate Moore has been one of the biggest factors in the business here.

Harry Crandall likewise is regarded as a motion picture genius by his fellow exhibitors. Crandall is the author of some of the innovations that have greatly aided the business here and his judgment is regarded as very valuable. Crandall is one of the men who believes that the motion picture business really is only in its infancy.

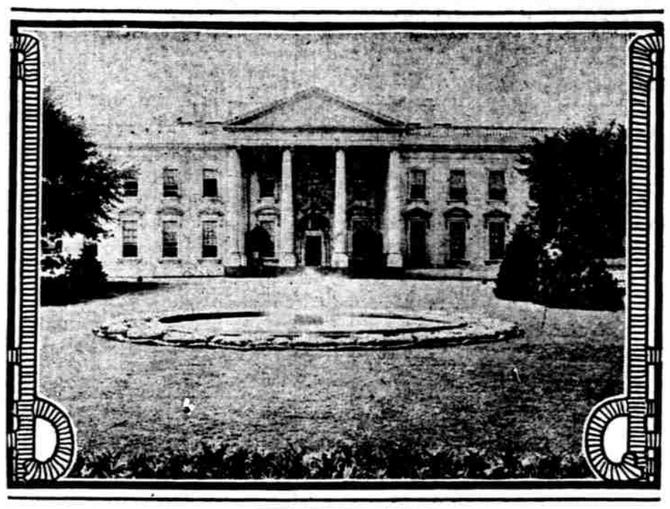
"Why," says Crandall, "10 cents is pretty near the top price an exhibitor can ask in Washington. That will change, for the people here will learn they have to pay more to get things the way they want them. The Strand Theater in New York charges 25 and 50 cents admission. The Vitagraph Theater in New York charges from 25 cents to $1 admission. There is a 25 and 50-cent picture theater in Philadelphia and all big cities soon will have them.

"The prediction of D. W. Griffith that the day is not far distant when the people will be paying $5 to see a motion picture may sound absurd at first blush. But five years ago a man would have been called crazy if he had said the public would pay $2 a seat to see a picture play in 1915. That price has been paid to see Griffith's masterpiece, 'The Birth of a Nation.'

"It is a fact that I am today showing at Crandall's Theater for a 10-cent admission the same pictures that one must pay 25 or 50 cents to see in New York or Philadelphia. Washington today gets the best in motion pictures, but the day may come when the best will cost too much to produce to exhibit at 10 cents and then I am sure the prices here will jump to 25 cents. Washington demands the best!"



THE NATIONAL MUSEUM.



THE WHITE HOUSE.

Dr. Charles H. Marshall was born in Amissville, Va., in 1863. He is a graduate of normal and academic departments of the Wayland Seminary and the Virginia Union University, of Richmond, Va. He received his degree of doctor of medicine from the medical department of the Howard University, and has been actively engaged in the practice of his profession in this city for the past twenty-three years. He has been engaged for several years in special work at the Freedmen's Hospital, and during that period has been a member of the staff, and fills the position of clinical assistant in gynecology. He is former president and at present one of the censors of the Medico-Chirugical Society of the District of Columbia. He served three years as a member of the executive committee of the National Medical Association; not being a candidate for re-election, his term expired on September 1, 1912. He is also a member of the International Tuberculosis Congress and president of the Medical, Dental, and Pharmaceutical Alumni Association of the Howard University. Dr. Marshall was a member of the Board of Education from 1912 to 1915, and was without question very conscientious in all that he did while a member of the board. In religion Dr. Marshall is a very active worker of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church, and is a member of the board of deacons. In connection with his church he established a free clinic for the benefit of the poor of the church and of those living in that vicinity. The doctor is keenly interested in the affairs of the city, and from its infancy has been a member of the Young Men's Protective League, an organization that now has a very large membership, is in splendid financial condition, and is one of the most potent forces for good work in this city. The Young Men's Christian Association is another force for civic righteousness to which the doctor has given both moral and financial aid, and he is now a member of the board of management of the Twelfth Street Branch of this association. He is a very active Republican, and was an alternate delegate to the National Republican Convention from the District in 1911, which was held in Chicago. His training and temperament admirably fit him for his profession, and to this he attributes mainly his wonderful success. He now resides with his wife and family at his home, 2710 P street northwest, this city.

MIDDLEMEN NOT HELD PARASITES

Department of Agriculture Refuses to Indict Much Abused Distributers.

AN INVOLVED SYSTEM

Spoilage of Fruits, Berries and Vegetables, Mounting to 40 Per Cent, Sends Prices Soaring.

The present abundance of fresh vegetables and fruits brings with it the perennial necessity for their rapid, economical distribution and for encouraging a generous and steady consumption, says the Department of Agriculture in a statement just issued. The machinery for moving these food products is complex. Retail dealers often are accused of not following closely the wholesale market quotations, and it is charged that in times of glutted markets they do not cut prices severely and aid in a rapid movement from producer to consumer.

But the responsibility for slow and uneconomic movement into consumptive channels is difficult to trace. The large class of food distributers known as "middlemen" are often accused of levying, arbitrarily, a heavy tribute on all foodstuffs passing from the producer to the consumer.

The Department of Agriculture does not indict the "middlemen" as a class, although it points out some of the abuses in the trade. As a matter of fact, say the department's specialists, economic laws would not permit the long-continued existence of a marketing agency which was solely a parasite.

Several important factors have contributed to the establishment of many middlemen as necessary agents in the present system of marketing. Production during the last decade has increased greatly, and improved methods and facilities for handling the increase have been introduced. Keeping pace with increased production has come the demand of consumers for more elaborate and efficient service.

Service Is Luxury.

Seldom is the fact considered that service can become a very expensive luxury. With the widening of the distance between the city and the source of the fruit and vegetable supply there has arisen the necessity for special agencies to meet the changed conditions.

The present distributive machinery, with all its strong points and its weaknesses, has been created of necessity, and it has weathered the storm of much adverse criticism. Every part of the country is now enjoying the perishable products of the most remote districts. Any readjustment of present market practices much be based upon the fact that some agency must continue to perform the functions of the present-day middleman.

With the perishable nature of a large part of the fruits and vegetables marketed there must be some loss. This often totals higher than the farmer realizes. For instance, according to the department's market specialists, the loss on such comodities as strawberries, peaches and grapes sometimes amounts to 30 or 40 per cent before they reach the hands of the retail trade.

It is always well to bear in mind the really serious side of losses and wastes. The spoiling of a dozen cantaloupes, a basket of grapes or a crate of strawberries represents an absolute loss to the community. No benefit accrues to producer, distributer or consumer from such a condition. The loss occurring at this point must be borne by both producer and consumer, and in a great many cases the distributer must bear his part of the burden. The department's specialists think in many cases losses and wastes are entirely too heavy a tax on food distribution and that the elimination of unnecessary wastes would do much toward effecting permanent, substantial economies in marketing and distributing as any readjustment of present marketing methods could do. The fact that a large percentage of their losses can be avoided by proper grading, packing and shipping, together with prompt, efficient handling while the goods are in process of distribution, makes it imperative that the subject be given special consideration by those interested in the efficient marketing of farm crops.

DR. SIMON P. W. DREW, FOUNDER AND PASTOR OF THE COSMOPOLITAN BAPTIST CHURCH, WASHINGTON, D. C. BETTER KNOWN AS THE COLORED BILLY SUNDAY.

The subject of this sketch was born August 6, 1870, the seventh son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Drew, sr., of Drewsville, Southampton County, Virginia. The older Drews were born in Virginia and the younger ones were born in North Carolina. Dr. Drew was born at Margaretsville, N. C., attended the public schools of North Carolina and studied theology at New York Training College, New York City. Licensed and ordained and introduced into the ministry in 1896 by the famous preacher, Dr. Robert S. McArthur, of the Calvary Baptist Church, now president of the World's Baptist Alliance.

Dr. Drew was the youngest preacher to be ordained by a Baptist Council and stood the highest in the examination. He built his first church in New York City. Was married November 21, 1898, to Miss Blanche Thomas, a public school teacher of Richmond, Va. He pastored St. Paul Baptist Church of Boston, the oldest colored church in New England, in 1902, coming to Washington in 1904, and conducted one of the most successful revivals ever known in Washington, after which he organized his present church.

Dr. Drew is one of the best known negro preachers in the country. Fully 100,000 colored people have been converted under his preaching in the United States. He is well known to all the prominent members of Congress, and a great number of them have spoken at his church. Such men as Speaker Champ Clark, Senator Moses E. Clapp, Senator Wesley L. Jones, Senator William Borah, Senator Reed Smoot, Senator Porter McCumber, Senator Charles Curtis, Representative Frank B. Willis, now the Governor of Ohio; Representative Martin D. Madden and others. He won his first national fame by defending Mattie Lomax, succeeding in getting President Taft to sentence her to life imprisonment instead of hanging. As an appreciation for this humane act the citizens of Washington presented him with a loving cup. He has a beautiful home, located at 1317 Otterman street northwest, which stands open at all times to those who are in search of advice and his wise counsel.